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Chapter 1 What is language?

[A] The origins of language

Some speculations of the origins of language:

① The divine source

The basic hypothesis: if infants were allowed to grow up without hearing any language, then they would spontaneously begin using the original god-given language.

Actually, children living without access to human speech in their early years grow up with no language at all.

② The natural-sound source

The bow-wow theory: the suggestion is that primitive words could have been imitations of the natural sounds which early men and women heard around them.

The “Yo-heave-ho” theory: the sounds produced by humans when exerting physical effort, especially when co-operating with other humans, may be the origins of speech sounds.

Onomatopoeic sounds

③ The oral-gesture source

It is claimed that originally a set of physical gestures was developed as a means of communication.

The patterns of movement in articulation would be the same as gestural movement; hence waving tongue would develop from waving hand.

④ Glossogenetics (言语遗传学)

This focuses mainly on the biological basis of the formation and development of human language.

Physiological adaptation → develop naming ability → interactions and transactions

Physical adaptation:

Human teeth are upright and roughly even in height.

Human lips have intricate muscle interlacing, thus making them very flexible.

The human mouth is small and contains a very flexible tongue.

The human larynx is lowered, creating a longer cavity called the pharynx, and making it easier for the human to choke on the pieces of food, but making the sound speech possible.

The human brain is lateralized. Those analytic functions (tool-using and language) are largely confined to the left hemisphere of the brain for most humans.

Two major functions of language:

Interactional: a social function of language.

Transactional: a function involving the communication

of knowledge and information

[B] The properties of language

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication.

a) System: combined together according to rules

b) Arbitrary: no intrinsic connection between the word “pen” and the thing in the world which it refers to

c) Vocal: the primary medium is sound for all languages

d) Human: language is human-specific (交际性与信息性)

Communicative vs. Informative:

Communicative: intentionally using language to communicate something

Informative: through/via a number of signals that are not intentionally sent

Design features (unique properties): the defining properties of human language that distinguish it from any animal system of communication

① Displacement (跨时空性, 移位性)

Language can be used to refer to contexts removed from the immediate situations of the speaker (refer to past and future time and to other locations)

② Arbitrariness (任意性)

There is no logical or natural connection between a linguistic form (either sound or word) and its meaning. While language is arbitrary by nature, it is not entirely arbitrary.

a) echo of the sounds of objects or activities: onomatopoeic words

b) some compound words

③ Productivity (能产性, 创造性)

Language is productive in that it makes possible the construction and interpretation of new signals by its users. (Creativity or open-endedness)

④ Cultural transition (文化传递性)

While human capacity for language has a genetic basis (everyone was born with the ability to acquire a language), the details of any language system are not genetically transmitted, but instead have to be taught and learnt.

⑤ Discreteness (可分离性)

Each sound in the language is treated as discrete.

⑥ Duality (双重结构性, 两重性或二元性)

Language is organized at two levels or layers simultaneously. The lower or basic level is a structure of sounds which are meaningless. The higher level is morpheme or word (double articulation)

The above six properties may be taken as the core

features of human language.

Vocal-auditory channel, reciprocity, specialization, non-directionality, or rapid fade, these properties are best treated as ways of describing human language, but not as a means of distinguishing it from other systems of communication.

[C] The development of written language

① pictograms & ideograms (象形文字和表意文字)

Pictogram: when some of the pictures came to represent particular images in a consistent way, we can begin to describe the product as a form of picture-writing, or pictograms.

Ideogram: the picture developed as more abstract and used other than its entity is considered to be part of a system of idea-writing, or ideogram

Hieroglyph: 古埃及象形文字

② Logograms (语标书写法)

When symbols come to be used to represent words in a language, they are described as examples of word-writing, or logograms.

“Arbitrariness”—a writing system which was word-based had come into existence.

Cuneiform--楔形文字—the Sumerians (5000 and 6000 years ago)

Chinese is one example of its modern writing system.

Advantages: two different dialects can be based on the same writing system.

Disadvantages: vast number of different written forms.

③ Syllabic writing (音节书写法)

When a writing system employs a set of symbols which represent the pronunciations of syllables, it is described as syllabic writing.

The Phoenicians: the first human beings that applied the full use of a syllabic writing system (ca 1000 BC)

④ Alphabetic writing (字母书写法)

Semitic languages (Arabic and Hebrew): first applied this rule

The Greeks: taking the inherently syllabic system from the Phoenicians via the Romans

Latin alphabet and Cyrillic alphabet (Slavic languages)

⑤ Rebus writing

Rebus writing evolves a process whereby the symbol used for an entity comes to be used for the sound of the spoken word used for that entity.

Chapter 2 What is linguistics?

[A] The definition of linguistics

Linguistics is generally defined as the scientific study of

language.

Process of linguistic study:

① **Certain linguistic facts are observed, generalization are formed;**

② **Hypotheses are formulated;**

③ **Hypotheses are tested by further observations;**

④ **A linguistic theory is constructed.**

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication.

[B] The scope of linguistics

General linguistics: the study of language as a whole

Phonetics: the general study of the characteristics of speech sounds (or the study of the phonic medium of language) (How speech sounds are produced and classified)

Phonology: is essentially the description of the systems and patterns of speech sounds in a language. (How sounds form systems and function to convey meaning)

Morphology: the study of the way in which morphemes are arranged to form words (how morphemes are combined to form words)

Syntax: the study of those rules that govern the combination of words to form permissible sentences (how morphemes and words are combined to form sentences)

Semantics: the study of meaning in abstraction

Pragmatics: the study of meaning in context of use

Sociolinguistics: the study of language with reference to society

Psycholinguistics: the study of language with reference to the workings of the mind

Applied linguistics: the application of linguistics principles and theories to language teaching and learning

Anthropological linguistics, neurological linguistics; mathematical linguistics; mathematical linguistics; computational linguistics

[C] Some important distinctions in linguistics

① **Prescriptive vs. Descriptive**

② **Synchronic vs. Diachronic**

The description of a language at some point in time;

The description of a language as it changes through time.

③ **Speech and writing**

Spoken language is primary, not the written

④ **Langue and parole**

Proposed by Swiss linguists F. de Saussure (sociological)

Langue: refers to the abstract linguistic system shared by all the members of a speech community

Parole: refers to the realization of langue in actual use

⑤ Competence and performance

Proposed by the American linguist N. Chomsky (psychological)

Competence: the ideal user's knowledge of the rules of his language

Chapter 3 Phonetics and phonology

[A] The definition of phonetics

Phonetics: the study of the phonic medium of language: it is concerned with all the sounds that occur in the world's languages.

Articulatory phonetics: the study of how speech sounds are made, or articulated.

Acoustic phonetics: deals with the physical properties of speech as sound waves in the air.

Auditory (or perceptual) phonetics: deals with the perception, via the ear, of speech sounds.

Forensic phonetics: has an application in legal cases involving speaker identification and the analysis of recorded utterances.

[B] Organs of speech

Voiceless: when the vocal cords are spread apart, the air from the lungs passes between them unimpeded.

Voiced: when the vocal cords are drawn together, the air from the lungs repeatedly pushes them apart as it passes through, creating a vibration effect.

All the English vowels are typically voiced (voicing).

The important cavities:

The pharyngeal cavity

The oral cavity

The nasal cavity

Lips, teeth, teeth ridge (alveolus), hard palate, soft palate (velum), uvula, tip of tongue, blade of tongue, back of tongue, vocal cords

[C] Orthographic representation of speech sounds

Broad and narrow transcriptions

IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet/Association)

Broad transcription: the transcription with letter-symbols only

Narrow transcription: the transcription with diacritics

E.g.:

[l] → [li:f] → a clear [l] (no diacritic)

[l] → [bild] → a dark [l] (~)

[l] → [helW] → a dental [l] ()

[p] → [pit] → an aspirated [p^h] (^h)

[p] → [spit] → an unaspirated [p] (no diacritic)

[n] → [5bQtn] → a syllabic nasal [n] (7)

[D] Classification of English consonants

In terms of manner of articulation (the manner in which obstruction is created)

① **Stops:** the obstruction is total or complete, and then going abruptly

[p]/[b], [t]/[d], [k]/[g]

② **Fricatives:** the obstruction is partial, and the air is forced through a narrow passage in the mouth

[f]/[v], [s]/[z], [W]/[T], [F]/[V], [h] (approximant)

③ **Affricates:** the obstruction, complete at first, is released slowly as in fricatives

[tF]/[dV]

④ **Liquids:** the airflow is obstructed but is allowed to escape through the passage between part or parts of the tongue and the roof of the mouth

[l] → a lateral sound; [r] → retroflex

⑤ **Glides:** [w], [j] (semi-vowels)

Liquid + glides + [h] → approximants

⑥ **Nasals:** the nasal passage is opened by lowering the soft palate to let air pass through it

[m], [n], [ŋ]

By place of articulation (the place where obstruction is created)

① **bilabials:** upper and lower lips are brought together to create obstructions

[p]/[b], [w] → (velar)

② **labiodentals:** the lower lip and the upper teeth

[f]/[v]

③ **dentals:** the tip of the tongue and the upper front teeth

[W]/[T]

④ **alveolars:** the front part of the tongue on the alveolar ridge

[t]/[d], [s]/[z], [n], [l], [r]

⑤ **alveo-palatals (palato-alveolars):** tongue and the very front of the palate, near the alveolar ridge

[F]/[V], [t]/[d]

⑥ **palatal:** tongue in the middle of the palate

[j]

⑦ **velars:** the back of the tongue against the velum

[k], [g], [ŋ] ... [w]

⑧ **glottals:** the glottal is the space between the vocal cords in the larynx

[h]

[E] Classification of English vowels

	Central	Back
Front i:		
	ʌ	u:
Close i		u

Semi-close e	E:	
Semi-open	E	C:
Open A	Q	R
B		B:

① **The highest position of the tongue:** front, central, back;

② **The openness of the mouth:** close, semi-close, semi-open, open;

③ **The roundness (shape) of the month (the lips):**

All the front, central vowels are unrounded vowels except [B]

All the back vowels, except [A:] are rounded vowels

④ **The length of the sound:** long vowels & short vowels

Larynx → (tense) or (lax)

Monophthongs, diphthongs

Cardinal vowels

[F] The definition of phonology

Phonetics is interested in all the speech sounds used in all human languages; how they are produced, how they differ from each other, what phonetic features they possess, how they can be classified, etc.

Phonology, on the other hand, is interested in the system of sounds of a particular languages; it aims to discover how speech sounds in a language form patterns and how these sounds are used to convey meaning in linguistic communication.

[G] Phone, phoneme, and allophone

Phone: the different versions of the abstract unit – phoneme

Phoneme: the mean-distinguishing sound in a language, placed in slash marks

Allophone: a set of phones, all of which are versions of one phoneme

[G] Phonemic contrast, complementary distribution, and minimal pair

Phonemic contrast: when two phonemes can occur in the same environments in two words and they distinguish meaning, they're in phonemic contrast.

E.g. pin & bin → /p/ vs. /b/ rope & robe → /p/ vs. /b/

Complementary distribution: two or more than two allophones of the same phonemes are said to be in complementary distribution because they can not appear at the same time, or occur in different environment, besides they do not distinguish meaning.

Minimal pair: when two different forms are identical in every way except for one sound segment which occurs

in the same place in the strings, the two sounds are said to form a minimal pair.

When a group of words can be differentiated, each one from the others, by changing one phoneme (always in the same position), then all of these words constitute a minimal sets.

[H] Some rules in phonology

① sequential rules

Syllable

Onset

rime

Nucleus

coda

[Consonant] vowel [consonant(s)]

Phonotactics of 3Cs occurring in onset:

No1:

___/s/

___voiceless stops: /p/, /t/, /k/

___approximants: /r/, /l/, /w/, /j/

No2:

The affricates [tʃ]/[dʒ] and the sibilants [s], [z], [ʃ], [ʒ] are not to be followed by another sibilants.

② assimilation rules

Co-articulation effects: the process of making one sound almost at the same time as the next is called co-articulation.

Assimilation & elision effects

Assimilation: two phonemes occur in sequence and some aspect of one phoneme is taken or copied by the other

E.g. nasalize a vowel when it is followed by a nasal sound.

③ deletion rule-Elision

Definition: the omission of a sound segment which would be present in deliberate pronunciation of a word in isolation

E.g. delete a [g] when it occurs before a final nasal consonant

[I] Suprasegmental features

① Stress

Word stress & sentence stress

The stress of the English compounds always on the first element

② Tone

Definition: Tones are pitch variations, which are caused by the differing rates of vibration of the vocal cords.

Pitch variations can distinguish meaning just like

morphemes.

Tone language, like Chinese, has four tones.

Level, rise, fall-rise, fall

③ Intonation

When pitch, stress and sound length are tied to the sentence rather than the word in isolation, they are collectively known as intonation.

English: the four basic types of intonation, or the four tones

The falling tone, the rising tone, the fall-rising tone, and the rise-fall tone

Chapter 4 Morphology

[A] The definition of morphology

Morphology is a branch of grammar which studies the internal structure of words and the rules by which words are formed.

Inflectional morphology

Derivational morphology (lexical morphology)

Morpheme: the smallest meaningful components of words

(A minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function)

[B] Free morphemes & bound morphemes

Free morphemes: can stand by themselves as single words

→ Lexical morphemes [n.a.v] & functional morphemes [conj.prep.art.pron.]

Bound morphemes: can not normally stand alone, but which are typically attached to another form

→ Derivational morphemes----→affix (suffix, infix, prefix) + root

→ Inflectional morphemes → 8

8 types of inflectional morphemes in English

Noun+ -'s, -s [possessive; plural]

Verb+ -s, -ing, -ed, -en [3rd person present singular; present participle; past tense, past participle]

Adj+ -er, -est [comparative; superlative]

[C] Derivational vs. inflectional

Inflectional morphemes never change the grammatical category of a word

Inflectional morphemes influence the whole category;

Derivational morphemes are opposite

Order: root (stem) + derivational + inflectional

[D] Morphological Rules

N. +ly→ a.; A. +ly→ adv.; guard overgeneralization

[E] Morphs and allomorphs

Morphs: the actual forms used to realize morphemes

Allomorphs: a set of morphs, all of which are versions of

one morpheme, we refer to them as allomorphs of that morpheme.

[F] Word-formation process

① **Coinage**→the invention of totally new terms

② **Borrowing**→the taking over of words form other languages

Loan-translation (Claque)→ a direct translation of the elements of a word into the borrowing language

Stand alone to be the opposite of word-formation

③ **Compounding**→ a joining of two separate words to produce a single form

Features of compounds

a) Orthographically, a compound can be written as one word, with or without a hyphen in between, or as two separate words.

b) Syntactically, the part of speech of the compound is generally determined by the part of speech of the second element.

c) Semantically, the meaning of a compound is often idiomatic, not always being the sum total of the meanings of its components.

d) Phonetically, the stress of a compound always falls on the first element,

While the second element receives secondary stress.

④ **Blending**→ taking over the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of other word

⑤ **Clipping**→ a word of more than one syllable reduced to a shorter form

⑥ **Back formation**→ a process by which new words are formed by taking away the suffix of an existing word
Hypocorisms→clipping or +ie

⑦ **Conversion**→ category change, functional shift

⑧ **Acronyms**→ new words are formed from the initial letters of a set of other words

⑨ **Derivation**→ the new words are formed by the addition of affixes to the roots, stems, or words

⑩ **Abbreviation**→ a shortened form of a word or phrase which represents the complete form

Analogy

Chapter 5 Grammar

[A] Types of grammar

The study of grammar, or the study of the structure of expressions in a language, has a very long tradition.

① **Mental grammar**: a form of internal linguistic knowledge which operates in the production and recognition of appropriately structured expressions in that language. → Psychologist

② **Linguistic etiquette**: the identification of the proper

or best structures to be used in a language. → Sociologist

③ **The study and analysis of the structures** found in a language, with the aim of establishing a description of the grammar of English, e.g. as distinct from the grammar of Russia or French. → Linguist

[B] The parts of speech

Nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions

→ the grammatical categories of words in sentences

[C] Traditional grammar (Categories and analysis)

Other categories: number, person, tense, voice and gender

Agreement:

English language ← natural gender

Grammatical gender → French

[D] Types of grammar concerning analysis

The prescriptive approach: The view of grammar as a set of rules for the proper use of a language

The descriptive approach: analysts collect samples of the language they are interested in and attempt to describe the regular structures of the language as it is used, not according to some view of how it should be used.

[E] Structural and immediate constituent analysis (IC Analysis)

Structural analysis: to investigate the distinction of forms (e.g. morphemes) in a language

IC Analysis: how small constituents (Components) in sentences go together to form larger constituents

[F] Labeled and bracketed sentences

Hierarchical organization of the constituents in a sentence

Label each constituent with grammatical terms such as Art. N. NP

Chapter 6 Syntax

[A] The definition of syntax

A subfield of linguistics that studies the sentence structure of language

[B] The basic components of a sentence

Sentence

Subject

Predicate

Referring expression comprises finite verb or a verb phrase and says something about the subject

[C] Types of sentences

Simple sentence: consists of a single clause which contains a subject and a predicate and stands alone as its

own sentence.

Coordinate (Compound) sentence: contains two clauses joined by a linking word called coordinating conjunctions, such as “and”, “by”, “or”...

Complex sentence: contains two, or more, clauses, one of which is incorporated into the other

Embedded clause ↔ matrix clause

① **subordinator** ② **functions as a grammatical unit**

③ **may be complete**

[D] The linear and hierarchical structures of sentences

When a sentence is uttered or written down, the words of the sentence are produced one after another in a sequence, which suggests the structure of a sentence is linear.

But the superficial arrangement of words in a linear sequence does not entail that sentences are simply linearly-structured; sentences are organized with words of the same syntactic category, such as NP or VP, grouped together.

Tree diagram of constituent structure

Brackets and subscript labels

[E] Some categories

Syntactic categories: refer to a word or a phrase that performs a particular grammatical function, such as the subject or the predicate

Lexical categories: (parts of speech)

Major lexical categories (open categories):

N. V. Adj. Adv.

Minor lexical categories (closed categories):

Det. Aux. Prep. Pron. Conj. Int.

Phrasal categories: NP, VP, PP, AP

[F] Grammatical Relations

The structural and logical functional relations of constituents

It concerns the way each noun phrase in the sentence relates to the verb

Subject of and direct object of

Structural subject, structural object

Logical subject (the doer of the action), the logical object (the recipient of the action)

These two groups of subjects and objects may have different positions

[G] Combinational rules

Are small in number → Yield all the possible sentences

Rule out the impossible ones

① **phrase structure rules (rewrite rules)**

S → NP VP

(A sentence consists of, or is rewritten as, a noun phrase and a verb phrase)

NP → (Det.) (Adj.) N (PP) (S)

An optional determiner....and obligatory noun,

VP → V (NP) (POP) (S)

AP → A (PP) (S)

PP → P NP

② the recursiveness of phrase structure rules

Significantly, the above rules can generate an infinite number of sentences, and sentences with infinite length, due to their recursive properties.

③ X-bar theory

Head → an obligatory word that gives the phrase its name

XP or X-phrase

XP → (Specifier) X (complement)

Formula:

X'' → Spec X'

X-bar theory (X-bar schema)

X' → X compl

Tree diagram

X''

Specifier X'

X complement

[H] Syntactic movement and movement rules

Syntactic movement: occurs when a constituent in a sentence moves out of its original place to a new place

Transformational rules

① NP-movement and WH-movement

NP-movement: active voice → passive voice

Postposing, preposing

WH-movement: affirmative → interrogative

Leftward matter to the sentence initial-position

② Other types of movement

Aux-movement: the movement of an auxiliary to the sentence-initial position

③ D-structure and S-structure

Two levels of syntactic representation of a sentence structure:

One that exists before movement takes place

The other that occurs after movement takes place

Formal linguistic exploration:

D-structure: phrase structure rules + lexicon

Sentence at the level of D-structure

The application of syntactic movement rules transforms a sentence from

D-structure level to S-structure level

Transformational-generative line of analysis

④ Move α- a general movement rule

Move any constituent to any place

Certain constituents can move to only certain positions

[I] Universal Grammar (UG)

Principles-and-parameters theory:

UG is a system of linguistic knowledge and a human species-specific gift which exists in the mind or brain of a normal human being and which consists of some general principles and parameters about natural languages.

① general principles of UG

Case condition principle: a noun phrase must have case and case is assigned by V or P to the object position or by Aux to the subject position

Adjacency condition or Case assignment: a case assignor and a case recipient should stay adjacency to each other.

It is strictly observed in English well-formed sentences, not other languages (no other phrasal category can intervene between a verb and its direct object)

The Adjacency condition must be subject to parametric variation in order to explain the apparent adjacency violations such as in French.

② The parameters of UG

Parameters are syntactic options of UG that allow general principles to operate in one way or another and contribute to significant linguistic variations between and among natural languages.

[+strict adjacency]

Adjacency parameter

[-strict adjacency]

[Rightward directionality]

The Directionality Parameter → involves word order

[Leftward directionality]

En: VP word order VP → V NP

Jp: VP word order VP → NP V

Natural languages are viewed to vary according to parameters set on UG principles to particular values.

Chapter 7 Semantics

[A] The definition of semantics

Definition: the study of meaning from the linguistic point of view

[B] Some views concerning the study of meaning

① the naming theory: The linguistic forms or symbols,

in other words, the words used in a language are taken to be labels of the objects they stand for; words are just names or labels for things.

② **the conceptualist view**: There's no direct link between a linguistic form and what it refers to (i.e. between language and the real world); rather, in the interpretation of meaning, they are linked through the mediation of concepts in the mind.

Thought/reference → concept

Symbol/Form (words)

Referent → (real object)

Proposed by Ogden & Richards

③ **contextualism**: John Firth

The situational context: in a particular spatiotemporal situation

Linguistic context (co-text): the probability of a word's co-occurrence or collocation with another word

④ **behaviorism** → Bloomfield based on contextualist view

Behaviorists define meaning of a language form as the situation in which the speaker utters it and the response it calls forth in the hearer

S: stimulus r: response

Jill Jack

S-----r.....s-----R

(the small letters r, s → speech)(the capitalized letter R, S → practical events)

[C] Sense and reference

Sense: is concerned with the inherent meaning of the linguistic form, abstract and de-contextualized.

Reference: means what a linguistic form refers to in the real, physical world; it deals with the relationship between the linguistic element and the non-linguistic world of experience

Moving star I once was bitten by a dog.

Morning star Mind you. There is a dog over there.

[D] Major sense relations

① **synonymy** → the sameness or close similarity of meaning

a. dialectal synonyms—synonyms used in different regional dialects

b. stylistic synonyms—synonyms differing in style

c. synonyms that differ in their emotive or evaluative meaning

d. collocational synonyms

e. semantically different synonyms

② **polysemy**—one word that has more than one related meaning

③ **homonymy**

Homophones: when two words are identical in sound

Homographs: when two words are identical in spelling

Complete homonyms: when two words are identical both in spelling and in

Sound

Etymology

④ **hyponymy**—inclusiveness

The word which is more general in meaning is called the superordinator.

The word which is more specific in meaning is called hyponym.

Co-hyponym

⑤ **antonymy**—oppositeness

Gradable antonyms

Complementary antonyms

Relational opposites: pairs of words that exhibit the reversal of a relationship between items

⑥ **metonymy**

Meaning based on a close connection in everyday experience, of which can be based on a container-contents relation, a whole-part relation, or a representative-symbol relationship

⑦ **collocation**

Organize the knowledge of words in terms of frequently occurring together

⑧ **prototypes**

The concept of a prototype helps explain the meaning of certain words, not in terms of component features, but in terms of resemblance to the clearest exemplar.

[E] Sense relations between sentences

① **X is synonymous with Y**

② **X is inconsistent with Y**

③ **X entails Y (Y is an entailment of X)**

④ **X presupposes Y (Y is a prerequisite of X)**

⑤ **X is a contradiction**

⑥ **X is semantically anomalous**

[F] Componential analysis → a way to analyze lexical meaning

Semantic features: the meaning of a word can be dissected into meaning components, or semantic features

Phoneme → distinctive features

Show how those words are related in meaning

[G] Predication analysis → a way to analyze sentence meaning proposed by British linguist G. Leech

① **the meaning of a sentence is not the sum total (of**

the meanings of all its components)

② Grammatical meaning and semantic meaning

Grammaticality selectional restrictions

Semantic analysis:

Predication (basic unit) → the abstract meaning of the sentence

Argument(s) 论元 predicate (谓词)

Logical participant(s) Sth said about an argument or states the logical relation linking the argument(s) in a sentence

The predicate can be regarded as the main element.

Tom smokes. → TOM (SMOKE) → one-place predication

Kids like apples. → KID, APPLE (LIKE) → two-place predication

It's raining. → (RAIN) → no-place predication

Chapter 8 Pragmatics

[A] The definition of pragmatics

Definition: the study of how speakers of a language use sentences to effect successful communication

What essentially distinguish semantics and pragmatics is whether in the study of meaning the context of use is considered.

If it is not, it is semantics.

If it is, it is pragmatics.

[B] Context

It is generally considered as constituted by the knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer.

Linguistic context → co-text

Physical context

[C] Sentence meaning v. utterance meaning

The dog is barking.

If we take it as a grammatical unit and consider it as a self-contained unit in isolation, then we treat it as a sentence.

If we take it as something a speaker utters in a certain situation with a certain purpose, then we are treating it as an utterance.

Meaning of a sentence is abstract, and de-contextualized.

Meaning of an utterance is concrete, and contextualized.

Utterance is based on sentence meaning; it is the realization of the abstract meaning of a sentence in a real situation of communication, or simply in a context.

[D] Speech Act Theory (言语行为理论)

Direct speech act

Indirect speech act

Face-threatening

Face-saving

Proposed by British philosopher John Austin in the late 1950s

Answer: what do we do when using language?

Constatives: statements that either state or describe, and thus verifiable

Performatives: sentences that don't state a fact or describe a state, and are not verifiable (perform certain acts)

Gave the distinction between constatives and performatives and gave rise to a new model:

[A speaker might be performing three acts simultaneously when speaking]

① **locutionary act**: (言内行为) the act of uttering words, phrases, clauses

It is the act of conveying literal meaning by means of syntax, lexicon and phonology.

② **illocutionary act**: (言外行为) the act of expressing the speaker's intention

It is the act performed in saying something.

③ **perlocutionary act**: (言后行为) the act performed by or resulting from saying something

It is the consequence of, or the change brought about by the utterance.

Linguists are more concerned about or interested in illocutionary act.

The classification of illocutionary act made by American philosopher-linguist John Searle

Five general categories:

① **representatives**: (阐述类) stating or describing, saying what the speaker believes to be true

② **directives**: (指令类) trying to get the hearer to do something

③ **commissives**: (承诺类) committing the speaker himself to some future course of action

④ **expressives**: (表达类) expressing feelings or attitude towards an existing state

⑤ **declaratives**: (宣告类) bringing about immediate changes by saying something

All the acts that belong to the same category share the same purpose or the same illocutionary point, but they differ in their strength or force.

All the utterances that can be made to serve the same purpose may vary in their syntactic form.

[E] Principles of conversation (Co-operative principles)

会话原则或合作原则

Proposed by Paul Grice, a logician and philosopher

The maxim of quantity: 量准则

The maxim of quality: 质准则

The maxim of relation: 关联准则

The maxim of manner: 方式准则

Significance: it explains how it is possible for the speaker to convey more than is literally said.

CP is nearly always observed, while these maxims are not, which gives rise to "Conversational implicatures", i.e. the language becomes indirect.

[F] Deixis, reference, anaphora, presupposition

① **Deixis**: There are some words in the language that cannot be interpreted at all unless the physical context, esp. the physical context of the speaker is known.

Person deixis

Place deixis

Time deixis

② **Reference**: an act by which a speaker or writer uses language to enable a listener or reader to identify something

Inference: any additional information used by the listener to connect what is said to what must be meant.

③ **Anaphora**: the second and any subsequent referring expression is an example of anaphora, and the first mention is called the antecedent.

Anaphora: subsequent reference to an already introduced entity

④ **Presupposition**: What a speaker assumes is true or is known by the speaker can be described as a presupposition

Constancy under negation: the presupposition remains true when a sentence is negated.

[G] Background knowledge

We actually create what the text is about, based on our expectations of what normally happens, i.e. using the concept of a SCHEMA.

Schema: a general term for a conventional knowledge structure which exists in memory. (Schemata)

Script: a dynamic schema, in which a series of conventional action takes place.

Chapter 9 Discourse Analysis

[A] Interpreting discourse

We, as language users, can cope with fragments, notices, or even ungrammatical sentences and texts apart from simply recognizing correct versus incorrect forms and structures.

The key element investigated in the study of discourse is that we attempt to arrive at a reasonable interpretation of

what the writer intended to convey.

[B] Cohesion and coherence 连接与连贯 (衔接)

Cohesion: the ties and connections which exist within texts that make the texts systematic and smooth.

Cohesive links (ties)

Connectedness based on the lexical level is not sufficient enough to make a text readable, or interpretable.

Coherence: connection within meaning, or in people.

[C] Speech event and conversational interaction

Conversational interaction: take turns, when someone interrupts, the speaker will stop until the end of the intruder's sentence

Completion point: by asking a question; by pausing

The one who keeps the turn will avoid having those two indicators occur together

Rudeness *v.* shyness

Chapter 10 Historical linguistics

[A] The purpose and significance of historical linguistics

Historical linguistics is the subfield of linguistics that studies language change. Diachronic linguistics

① the identification of the changes enables us to reconstruct the linguistic history of that language, hypothesizes its earlier forms

② also it enables us to determine how non-linguistic factors, such as social, cultural and psychological factors, interact over time to trigger linguistic change

[B] The nature of language change

Language change is universal, continuous and, to a considerable degree, regular and systematic; a gradual and constant process, often indiscernible to speakers of the same generation

Language change is extensive, all aspects of grammar-phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics.

[C] Major periods in the history of English

The division of changes in English only makes it easier, more convenient and more practical to study language change.

Old English: (449-1100)

Middle English: (1100-1500)

Modern English: (1500-now)

[D] Linguistic change of English

Language change is essentially a matter of change in the grammar.

① **sound change**

a) vowel sound change → ca. 1400-1600, known as the great vowel shift

- b) sound loss (apocope) 词尾脱落
- c) sound addition (epenthesis) 插音
- d) sound movement (metathesis) 换位

② morphological change

- a) affix loss: loss of gender and case markings
drop of causative verb formation rule
- b) affix addition: -able, -ment (from French), -ize

③ syntactic change

- a) rule loss: (1) adj, agree with the head noun in case, number and gender; (2) double-negation rule
- b) rule addition: (1) particle movement rule; (2) distinction between auxiliary verbs and main verbs
- c) rule change: (1) negation way; (2) sentence structure: SVO, VSO, SOV, OSV

The loss of case contrasts in English was compensated for with the adoption of the consistent SVO order.

④ lexical change → most vigorous and on-going change

- a) lexical loss: no longer in use
- b) lexical addition: borrowing and word-formation (refer to syntax)
- c) Semantic change: (1) semantic broadening; (2) semantic narrowing; (3) semantic shift: a process of semantic change in which a word loses its former meaning and acquires a new, sometimes related one.

[E] Language family → historical and comparative linguistics

Protolanguage: the original form of a language family that has ceased to exist

A language family is established by the use of a method known as comparative reconstruction.

The Indo-European Family: 150

The Sino-Tibetan Family: 300

The Austro-wesian Family: 1000

The Afro-asiatic Family: 250

Grim's (the German scholar) major contribution to historical linguistics is his explanation of the relationships among cognates in terms of a sound shift.

Grim's law:

Voiced stops become voiceless

Voiceless stops become fricatives

Voiced aspirates become de-aspirated

[F] The causes of language change

As a matter of fact, no linguist has ever claimed to know all the causes of language change.

Physiological, linguistic, or sociological factors

① sound assimilation

② rule simplification and regularization

③ internal borrowing → analogue

④ elaboration: 规则细化

⑤ **social triggers**: Norman Conquest, British colonial settlement, the country's political, cultural and economic advances in distant lands

⑥ cultural transmittion

⑦ children's approximation toward the adult grammar: 儿童语言习得

Children acquire their native language not through formal instruction of grammatical rules.

Chapter 11 Sociolinguistics

The sub-discipline of linguistics that studies language in society

[A] Speech community and speech variety

SC: a speech community is a group of people who form a community, which may have as few members as a family or as many members as a country, and share the same language or a particular variety of language.

The linguistic markers that characterize individual social groups may serve as social markers of group membership.

SV: also known as language variety refers to any distinguishable form of speech used by a speaker or group of speakers.

A speech variety is no more than a dialectal variety of a language.

Regional dialects

Sociolects (social dialects) carry no value judgment and simply

Registers (functional dialects) refer to a distinct form of a language

[B] Regional, social, stylistic, and idiolectal variations

Regional variation: is a speech variation according to the particular area where a speaker comes from, which is the most discernible and definable

Geographical barriers: loyalty to one's native speech; physical and psychological resistance to change

Accent (refers to a way of pronunciation which tells the listener something about the speaker's regional or social background); **pronunciation; vocabulary; syntax**

Language standardization → language planning is one way out of the communication dilemma.

Social variation (sociolect): linguistic differences associated with respective definable social groups even within the same geographical location.

Stylistic variation: (register)

① ranges on a continuum from casual or colloquial to

formal or polite according to the type of communicative situation

② may be used by a particular group of people

③ a particular register often distinguishes itself from other register by having a number of distinctive words, by special grammatical constructions

Idiolectal variation: (idiolect)

A speaker's linguistic performance is heterogeneous, rather than homogeneous.

Idiolect is a personal dialect of an individual speaker that combines aspects of all the elements regarding regional, social, and stylistic variation, in one way or another.

[C] Standard and non-standard language

The standard language is a superposed, socially prestigious dialect of language. **SAE** (Standard American English) ↔ Network English

Non-standard, or vernacular, languages:

All dialects of a language are equally effective in expressing ideas.

Government policy, historical and cultural tradition

National (official) language

[D] Lingua franca, pidgins, and creoles

Lingua franca: is a variety of language that serves as a medium of communication among groups of people from diverse linguistic backgrounds. It can be generalized to refer to any other language used as a trade or communication medium.

Pidgin: is a variety of language that is generally used by native speakers of other languages as a medium of communication. It may contain significant grammatical features of two or more languages, but rule-governed.

Creole: is originally a pidgin that has become established as a native language in some speech community. A pidgin becomes a Creole when it is adopted by a population as its primary language, and children learn it as their first language.

[E] Diglossia and bilingualism

Diglossia: is a situation in which two very different varieties of language co-exist in a speech community, each with a distinct range of purely social functions and appropriate for certain situations. One is a more standard variety called the high variety (H-variety), the other is a non-prestige variety called the low variety (L-variety).

Classical language → local vernacular

The use of a particular variety may not be determined by a speaker's social status, but by the communicative situation the speaker is in.

Generally, these two levels of varieties are generally two

varieties of the same language. But in the history, there are some other situations in which the high variety may have no genetic relationship with the low one. (the Middle Ages)

Bilingualism: refers to a linguistic situation in which two standard languages are used either by an individual or by a group of speakers, such as the inhabitants of a particular region or a nation.

Perfect bilingualism is uncommon. One language is usually more dominant than the other.

Most bilingual communities have one thing in common, i.e. a fairly clear functional differentiation of the two languages in respect of speech situations known as domains.

Code-switching: a bilingual speaker often uses two languages alternatively during a conversation with another bilingual speaker.

[F] Ethnic dialect → Black English Vernacular (BEV)

Ethnic dialect: a social dialect of a language, often cutting across regional differences

BEV: spoken mostly by a large section of non-middle-class American blacks. It is stigmatized as bad English, a purely social attitude that has no linguistic basis.

The social environment of BEV:

The distinctive features of BEV persist not for racial reasons, but for social, educational, and economical reasons.

Speakers of an ethnic dialect like BEV regard the language they speak the major symbol of their socio-cultural identity.

Some features of BEV:

① **phonological characteristics:** The frequent simplification of consonant clusters at the end of words when one of the two consonants is an alveolar /t/, /d/, /s/, or /z/; the l-deletion rule; the deletion of some word-final stop consonants in words like "side" and "borrowed";

② **syntactical characteristics:** the frequent absence of the copula "be"; the systematic use of the expression "it is" where SE uses "there is" in the sense of "there exists"; the use of double negation constructions.

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-
-

[G] Social dialect

Varieties of language used by groups defined according to class, education, age, sex, and a number of other social parameters

Overt prestige v. covert prestige

① Educational varieties

One extreme form of the educational influence on the way one speaks is the fact that some college professors talk like a book.

Lower class and less educated: [n] rather than [N]
[h]-dropping

② Age varieties

Lexical variation according to the age correlates with time periods is more noticeable across three-generation time span.

Old people tend to be more conservative than the younger generation

③ Gender varieties

Female speakers tend to use more prestigious forms than male speakers with the same general social background:

a) **Females are politer in conversation;**

b) **the difference of speech acts** (the frequent use of polite formulas in female speeches)

The choice of words in terms of grammatical gender is sexist: use of “he” to refer to either sexes or unknown or irrelevant

The sexist bias is also rooted by the way neutral terms are interpreted.

Governor/governess |Master/mistress |Career woman/man

English is one such language whose gender terms are heavily asymmetric in morphological representation. Male terms get unmarked and the female term is often marked by adding a bound morpheme, or by compounding.

Feminist movement, use more gender-neutral expressions

④ Register varieties (situational dialects)

Register: one language variety appropriate for use in particular speech situations, in contrast to language varieties that are associated with the social or regional grouping of their customary users.

Speech variation in register may be carried over into the written language.

⑤ Address terms

Address term: or address form, refers to the word or words used to address somebody in speech or writing.

Common English address terms:

First name

Last name

Title+ last name

Title alone

Kin term: Dad, mummy etc.

⑥ Slang

Slang: a casual use of language that consists of expressive but nonstandard vocabulary, typically of arbitrary, flashy and often ephemeral coinages and figures of speech characterized by spontaneity and sometimes by raciness.

Purpose: a desire for novelty, for vivid emphasis, for membership in a particular group or class, for being up with the terms of a little ahead

Negative connotation: a low or vulgar form of language

In-group language or community jargon

⑦ Linguistic taboo

Linguistic taboo: refers to a word or expression that is prohibited by the polite society from general use.

Obscene, profane, and swear words

Many languages contain two words or expressions with the identical linguistic meaning, with one acceptable and the other a cause of embarrassment or horror.

The avoidance of using taboo: language mirrors social attitudes, emotions and value judgment, and has no linguistic basis.

⑧ Euphemism

Euphemism: a mild, indirect or less offensive word or expression substituted when the speaker or writer fears more direct wording might be harsh, unpleasantly direct, or offensive

Death or dying, ask for location of the “bathroom” etc.

Often when the negative connotation of a word is recognized in its euphemistic form, a new euphemism will have to be sought for.

Toilet, WC, powder room, Men’s Room, Ladies’ Room, Gentlemen, bathroom, restroom

As long as there is a need to avoid the use of taboo language, there is a need for the use of euphemistic substitutes.

Chapter 12 Psycholinguistics

The study of language in relation to the mind

P.S. some of the following discussed sometimes fall into the scope of neurolinguistics and sociolinguistics, esp. concerning the structure of the brain.

[A] The biological foundations of language

Human linguistic ability largely depends on the structure and dynamics of the human brain, rather than, the structure of the vocal cords.

Neurons → cerebral cortex → hemisphere

Brain lateralization (specific to human beings): the left hemisphere has primary responsibility for language,

while the right hemisphere controls visual and spatial skills as well as the perception of nonlinguistic sounds and musical melodies.

The localization of cognitive and perceptual functions in a particular hemisphere of the brain is called lateralization.

[B] Linguistic lateralization

Left hemispheric dominance for language, this hypothesis has been proved by Dichotic listening research (两耳分听试验)

The sound presented in the right ear goes directly to the left brain. The sound heard in the left ear, on the other hand, must first go to the right hemisphere, from where it is transferred to the left side of the brain for processing.

Right ear advantage: (右耳优势) it appears to exist primarily for linguistic stimuli, both meaningful and nonsensical.

[C] The language centers

① **Broca's area** (French surgeon and anatomist): The frontal lobe in the left cerebral hemisphere damaged extreme difficulty in producing speech;

[Speech production deficit] word-finding difficulties and problems with syntax

② **Wernicke's area** (German physician, 1874): Strengthened Broca's claim, and generated intense interest in the hypothesis that different areas within the left hemisphere fulfill different linguistic functions

[Speech comprehension deficit] difficult in understanding speech (posterior speech cortex)

③ **The angular gyrus** (角形脑回): It is responsible for converting a visual stimulus into an auditory form and vice versa

The word is heard and comprehended via Wernicke's area. This signal is then transferred via the arcuate fasciculus to Broca's area (the angular gyrus), where preparations are made to produce it. A signal is then sent to the motor cortex to physically articulate the word.

④ **language perception, comprehension and production**

[D] The critical period for language acquisition ← neurobiologist Eric Lenneberg

It refers to a period in one's life extending from about two to puberty, during which the human brain is most ready to acquire a particular language and language learning can proceed easily, swiftly, and without explicit instruction.

Language faculty of an average human degenerates after the critical period.

{Language can be acquired after the critical period.}

[E] Early views on language and thought

Mentalist → thought and language were identical, proposed by Plato

Empiricist → languages were signs of psychological experiences (Aristotle)

Bloomfield, American psychologist, founder of Behaviorism, supported the mentalist: thinking was a system of movements that had been reduced from actual speech to the point where they were no longer visible.

Violates the following two phenomena:

Non-speaking humans → display complex thought process

I didn't mean to say that

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: (the American anthropologist-linguist Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf)

"We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significance as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language."

Linguistic determination—the strong notion: Language determines thought

Linguistic relativism—speakers of different language perceive and experience the world differently, i.e. relative to their linguistic background

This hypothesis appears plausible, but its strong version has very few adherents today.

Whorf did not only depend too heavily on the literal use of words but also on grammatical structure.

The weaker version is accepted. Language may be used to provide ideas, bring about a change in beliefs and values, solve problems, and keep track of things in memory. Language does influence the perceptions, memory tasks, and other verbal and nonverbal behavior of human beings by its convenience, availability, and habitual use.

[F] Argues for and against the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis

① **Words and meaning**: Relation is arbitrary; without the particular words of snow doesn't mean he can not perceive differences in varieties of snow...

② **Grammatical structure**

Many grammatical features of a language are purely superficial aspects of linguistic structure. They don't have the kind of interdependent relationship with the perceptual system of the speakers of that language.

(Grammatical gender)

③ Translation

Successful translation between languages can be made. That he (Sapir) can explain/describe Hopi concepts in English for an average English speaker to understand easily fully proves that translation can be obtained.

④ Second language acquisition

Bilingualism: have a consistent conceptual-perceptual system of the physical world. Don't have to have double minds.

⑤ language and world views

People who use the same language may have different world views.

People who use different languages may have the similar world views.

One language can describe many different world views.

[G] Understanding the relationship between language and thought

① functions of language:

Interpersonal communication: convey information, thoughts, feelings from one to another

Intrapersonal communication: language facilitates thinking, speech behavior, and action for the individual
Halliday: ideational, interpersonal and textual functions

a) Informative

b) Interpersonal function

- (1) Performative function
- (2) Emotive function
- (3) Expressive function
- (4) Phatic function

c) Recreational function

d) Metalingual function

② Language and thought may be viewed as two independent circles overlapping in some parts.

When language and thought are identical or closely paralleled to each other, we may regard thought as "subvocal speech", and speech as "overt thought"

Nonverbal signals: facial expressions, grimaces, gestures, postures, or proxemic space can be used to express thoughts.

The relationship between the coding system of language on the one hand and the conceptualizing system of thought on the other is conventional rather than genetic. Bilingual speakers switch between the two languages concerned, not converting one mode of thinking into the other, but rather, making transition between the two linguistic coding systems.

Chapter 13 First Language Acquisition (FLA)

Language acquisition refers to children's development of their first language, that is, the native language of the community in which a child has been brought up (naturally and successfully).

[A] The biological basis of language acquisition

What is meant by the biological, or nativist, view of language acquisition is that human are equipped with the neural prerequisites for language and language use, just as birds are biologically "prewired" to learn the songs of their species.

No language is inferior, or superior, to any other language.

No single human is a better or worse language acquirer than any other human.

Different languages have a similar level of complexity and detail, and reflect general abstract properties of the common linguistic system called the Universal Grammar (UG).

[B] Language acquisition as the acquisition of grammatical rules

Before 5, knowing most of the intricate grammatical system of their native language

What is acquired is not a bunch of utterances but a set of rules, conditions, and elements (fundamental grammatical rules) that allow one to speak and understand speech.

[C] The role of input and interaction, instruction, correction and reinforcement, imitation

① the role of input and interaction

Genetic predisposition + an appropriate linguistic environment

Access to language data and opportunities to interact with the input

Modified speech ← relationship → language acquisition

Caretaker speech (babytalk, motherese, or parentese): without it doesn't mean acquiring language slowly

Advantages: 1) help heighten its comprehensibility
2) make it easier for children to match linguistic forms with their meanings

② the role of instruction

"Children learn to speak because adults teach them to speak."

- 1) this view overestimates what adults can do, and at the same time
- 2) this view underestimates what children can do, and what they actually do

Children require little conscious instruction. Parents

often fail their attempt to teach children grammatical rules, and only playing a minor role at best

③ the role of correction and reinforcement

Assumption 1: children received constant correction for using a “bad” grammar and rewards when using a “good” grammar

Assumption 2: children learnt to produce sentence because they were positively reinforced when they said something right and negatively reinforced when they said something wrong.

Behaviorist learning theory → a child’s verbal behavior was conditioned through association between a stimulus and a relevant response.

Correction plays a minor role; even when syntactic correction does occur, children often do not know what the problem is and are unable to make corrections.

④ the role of imitation

The hypothesis that children learnt language by simply imitating the speech of those around them is not true.

A more reasonable explanation is that: children are attempting to construct and generalize their own grammatical rules.

Besides, children who cannot speak can learn the language spoken to them and understand what is said.

Children don’t blindly mimic adult speech in a parrot fashion, but rather exploit it in very restricted ways to improve their linguistic skills

[D] Stages of first language acquisition

In general, children begin uttering their first words sometimes during the second year of life. During the following 4 to 5 years, linguistic development occurs quite rapidly.

① the prelinguistic stage (babbling age)

3 months: /k/, /u/

3-4 months: babbling speech like sounds

6 months: able to sit up; produce a number of different vowels and consonants (meaningless), deaf baby, baby born of non-speaking deaf parents also babble

② the one-word stage → holophrastic sentences

2 year-old: use one word to serve a naming function, to refer to familiar people, toys, pets, drinks and objects in the child’s environment, indicate certain actions and demands, or convey emotions.

Simple nouns and verbs

Very few functional words such as prep., art., and aux. verbs

Choose the most informative word that applies to the situation being commented upon

Overextension (underextension of reference): use the same word for things that have a similar appearance

③ the multiword stage

2-3 year-old: the salient feature of the utterances at this stage ceases to be the number of words, but the variation in strings of lexical morphemes (telegraphic speech)

Lacking grammatical morphemes, but following the principles of sentence formation [make no word order errors at this stage]

5 year-old: has an operating vocabulary of more than 2000 words

[E] The development of grammatical system

① the development of phonology

The emergence of articulatory skills begins around the age when children start to produce babbling sounds.

Children first acquire the sounds found in all languages of the world, and in later stages acquire the “more difficult” sounds.

Certain sounds that occur in babbling are lost when children began to speak the language, and then reappear at a later stage: /l/ and /r/

② the development of syntax

Children’s early language is not only semantically based, but also makes reference to syntactic categories, and grammatical relations.

Two-word stage: noun-like element + predicate-like element

Then, add functional words as well as inflectional and derivational morphemes of the language

-ing, in, on, the regular plural ending “-s”

Negative sentences: no/all gone /// negative words occur at the beginning of expressions /// insert the negative “no”, “can’t” or “don’t” inside the sentence, usually between subject and the predicate

English questions have developed in the similar way, in an interrelated way with the development of the auxiliary verb system

③ the development of morphology

Beyond the telegraphic stage: incorporate some of the inflectional morphemes

1st one: -ing; 2nd one: marking of regular plurals with the “-s” form (overgeneralization); 3rd one: -ed rule to all verbs; begin to learn both regular and irregular forms as individual words

④ the development of vocabulary of semantics

The first two years: 50-100 words

Semantic referent to a word expands: overgeneralization

The age of two and a half years: vocabulary is expanding

rapidly

The age of three: hundreds of words

Connection between a word and its denotative meaning is more like that of adult language

By five: 4.6 words per sentence

Increase of about 25 words per day

The age of six: 7800 words → English-speaking school children

By the age of eight: 17600 words or 28300 including derived forms

In general, children have virtually acquired the basic fabric of their native language at the age of five or six.

Per-school years are crucial period for first language acquisition.

Chapter 14

Second language Acquisition/Learning

[A] Acquisition v. learning

Acquisition: refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations; or the gradual and subconscious development of ability in the first language by using it naturally in daily communicative situations (by American SLA scholar Stephen Krashen)

Learning: refers to a conscious process of accumulating knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of a language, usually obtained in school setting.

[B] Transfer and Interference

Transfer: while learning the target language consciously or unconsciously, learners will subconsciously use their L1 knowledge in learning a second language.

Positive or negative

Interference (negative transfer) was once believed to be the major source of difficulties experienced and errors made by L2 learners.

Contrastive analysis: establish the linguistic differences between the native and target language systems, to predict problems and errors

[Old view]: L2 errors were predominantly the result of negative transfer, or mother tongue interference. Thus, learning a L2 is always to overcome the differences.

Empirical investigation:

3% → interference errors, 85% → developmental errors

[New view]: L2 learning is a process of contracting and modifying rules of communication

[C] Error analysis and the natural route of SLA development

There was supposed to be a universal route in L2

learning because negative transfer is not the major factor in SLA as it was once assumed to be.

L2=L1 hypothesis: the process of SLA and FLA are very similar.

This was investigated through the analysis of learner errors. There are striking similarities in the ways in which different L2 learners acquire a new language.

L2 learners follow broadly similar routes, although minor differences exist due to variable learner factors and learning situations.

[D] Interlanguage and fossilization

Interlanguage: the language that a learner constructs at a given stage of SLA. It consists of a series of interlocking and approximate linguistic systems in between and yet distinct from the learner's native and target languages.

Fossilization: it was once assumed that learners' Interlanguage would develop gradually in the direction of the target language competence if provided with sufficient and the right kind of language exposure and interaction. But most L2 learners failed to reach the end-point of the interlanguage continuum and acquire the native-like competence in the target language.

Explanation: learners' interlanguage fossilized some way short of target language competence while the internalized rule system contained rules that are different from those of the target language system.

Chinese sound /d/ → English /W/, /T/; he for he or she

The use of the present tense form for a past tense verb
3rd person singular form without "s"

[E] The role of input and formal instruction

① **SLA takes place only when the learner has access to L2 input and the opportunity to interact with the input.**

Input may take the form of exposure in natural settings or formal instruction, either spoken or written; optimum input is needed.

Comprehensible input: the use of learned structures and vocabulary, the linguistic and extralinguistic contexts of the input data, and the learner's general knowledge to interpret new language items.

Two very important kinds of input methods:

Interaction: taking part in communication activities

Intake: the input that is assimilated and fed into the interlanguage system

② **in general, studies of the effects of formal instruction support the hypothesis that instruction aids SLA**

L2 learners are much more likely to obtain comprehensible input in the intake-type environment of a classroom setting, other than in the exposure-type environment of a natural setting.

Casual and spontaneous conversation helps a little, while planned speech, writing or career-oriented examination help a lot.

[F] Individual learner factors like age, motivation, acculturation and personality

The rate and ultimate success in SLA are affected not only by learner's experience with optimal input and instruction, but also by individual learner factors.

① the optimum age for second language acquisition

Adolescents: quicker and more effective L2 learners than young children

Why: the learner's flexibility of the language acquisition faculty has not been completely lost while one's cognitive skills have developed considerably to facilitate the processing of linguistic features of a new language.

② motivation

Motivation: the learner's overall goal and orientation

Instrumental motivation: learner's goal is functional (功能性学习动机)

Integrative motivation: learner's goal is social (介入性学习动机)

③ acculturation (文化移入, 文化适应)

It has some relation with integrative motivation, the extent to which learners differ in the process of adapting to the new culture of the L2 community. This adaptation process is called acculturation

The learning of a second language involves, and is dependent on, the acquisition of the culture of the target language community.

The acculturation hypothesis states simply that the more a person aspires to acculturate to the community of the target language, the further he or she will progress along the developmental continuum, but focuses not so much on the actual processing of the second language as on the social and psychological conditions under which L2 processing is most likely to take place successfully.

④ personality

Outgoing personality may contribute to language acquisition

Extroverted $\leftrightarrow$ introverted

Research results lead only partial support to this hypothesis.

Oral fluency, not overall proficiency in a second language

In general, a good second language learner is, among other things, an adolescent who has a strong and well-defined motivation to learn, who is able to respond and adaptable to different learning situations, who seeks out all opportunities and makes maximum use of them to interact with the input, who employs appropriate learning strategies, and who is willing to identify himself or herself with the culture of the target language community.